

Tuolumne County
Administration Center
2 South Green Street
Sonora, California 95370
Phone (209) 533-5521
Fax (209) 533-6549

Alicia L. Jamar
*Clerk of the Board
of Supervisors*

**WATER AGENCY
COUNTY OF TUOLUMNE**

Sherri Brennan, *First District*
John Gray, *Fourth District*

Randy Hanvelt, *Second District*

Evan Royce, *Third District*
Karl Rodefer, *Fifth District*

**Water Policy Advisory Committee
Thursday, March 26, 2015 @ 2:00 PM
Board of Supervisor Chambers
2 South Green Street, 4th Floor Sonora**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Consideration of adopting the minutes from the January 22, 2015 meeting.
4. Report on Board of Supervisors March 3 decision changing the voting and quorum composition of the Water Policy Advisory Committee.
5. Presentation on the Calaveras Watershed Management Pilot Program.
6. Report on Board of Supervisors March 17 water strategy discussion.
7. Report on Tuolumne County Groundwater systems and California's Sustainable Groundwater Act and its impact on Tuolumne County.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance (i.e. auxiliary aids or services) in order to participate in this public meeting, please contact the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, (209-533-5521). Notification 48 hours prior to the start of the meeting will enable the Clerk to make reasonable accommodations to ensure accessibility to this public meeting.

8. Consideration of recommending the Board of Supervisors approve a letter of support to the State Water Resources Control Board's notice of intent to adopt a mitigated negative declaration for the Pinecrest Lake Level Modification Project.
9. Report on 2015 drought impacts:
 - a. TUD
 - b. Lake Don Pedro Community Services District
10. Discussion of Water Management Agility in Drought Conditions with respect to Uphill Reservoir release requirements other than for consumptive/agricultural uses.
 - a. Consideration of recommending the Board of Supervisors adopt a Resolution concerning the potential water draw down at Lake Tulloch.
 - b. Report on a March 28th Lake Tulloch Alliance sponsored Forum to build a bi-partisan, Central Valley/Sierra Foothill coalition to press the State Legislature and Governor Brown for emergency relief from unrestrained reservoir releases for purely environmental purposes.
11. Identification of county projects for funding under the State Water Bond and the Governor's \$1 Billion Emergency Drought Package.
12. Reports
13. Adjourn

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**Water Policy Advisory Committee
Wednesday, December 17, 2014 @ 1:30 PM
Board of Supervisor Chambers
2 South Green Street, 4th Floor Sonora
MINUTES**

1. Call to Order: Karl Rodefer called the meeting to order at 2 PM
2. Public Comment: Jim Grinnell: The County's General Plan should include provisions for putting water lines by vacant lots.
3. Consideration of adopting the minutes from the October 23, 2014 meeting.

Minutes were adopted 2-0

4. Discussion of a Tuolumne County Water Agency mission, vision, and workplan.

Karl Rodefer: County General Plan contains the vision. Opportunities for water funding will come with the State Water Bond. The County needs to identify a groundwater management agency.

Tom Trott: County wants to unite the water vision across the County. All want a

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safe and reliable water supply.

5. Presentation on drought impacts on wells in Tuolumne County.

Karl Rodefer: Spoke about well failures and long term hook ups to TUD and similar municipal water systems.

Nathan Rosasco: Are most of the failing wells shallow and initially borderline?

Beverly Shane: Majority of failing wells are shallow and low flow.

Ron Ringen: How many failed wells have received temporary tanks?

Tracie Riggs: To date, no one has yet received tanks, but this will likely take place next week. Water will be purchased from TUD.

Nathan Rosasco: A deeper well isn't necessarily a better well.

Joe Opie: What if the County allowed residences to hold water in surface retention ponds on their property?

Randy Hanvelt: Read some proposed legislation that would positively impact agricultural water storage.

6. Discussion of California's Sustainable Groundwater Act and its impact on Tuolumne County.

Karl Rodefer and Randy Hanvelt: Gave a summary of a meeting with fellow Board members in the Central Valley about the taking of water from Northern California. The County will need to identify a groundwater sustainability agency.

Jim Grinnell: The ditch system can be beneficial to the groundwater recharge.

Joe Opie: The majority of the ditch system is shaded which yields less evaporation. Where are restrictions on creating water retention ponds found?

Beverly Shane: The County doesn't restrict these.

Mary Moore: Will need to get a permit from the Water Board, Army Corp of

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Engineers, and possibly the Department of Fish & Wildlife.

Randy Hanvelt: Growing 4 billion board feet of timber a year more than is being harvested. A disaster is waiting to happen.

Joe Opie: Why don't we use the University of California approved system to manage the forest?

Charlotte Hague: Most of the State's water comes from snowpack. We need to manage the forest if we want more water.

Karl Rodefer: Wants to confirm if County is required to produce a groundwater management plan.

Ruanne Mikkelsen: Read the legislation and it doesn't exclude any counties.

Jim Grinnell: Would it be prudent for the County to create a Water Conservation District?

Tom Trott: There isn't a groundwater basin in Tuolumne County.

7. Reports: None

8. Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 3:08 PM. Next meeting is January 22 at 2 PM.

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**Water Policy Advisory Committee
Thursday, January 22, 2015 @ 2:00 PM**

**Board of Supervisor Chambers
2 South Green Street, 4th Floor Sonora**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order: A quorum was not present. Therefore, no official action can occur. A meeting will not be held in February. The next meeting is in March.

2. Public Comment

3. Consideration of adopting the minutes from the December 17, 2014 meeting.

No quorum.

4. Discussion of issues to be raised to the County Water Agency.

Karl Rodefer: Talked about the Headwaters Framework he learned about at ACWA. There is an effort to make this document just as important as the Delta. This should come in the future.

5. Identification of County projects for funding under the State Water Bond.

Tom Trott: Began the discussion. The State budget contains lots of water bond

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money in several categories.

Ron Ringen: Water storage projects will begin at the end of 2016.

Chris Trott: Will send a summary of annual State grant meetings.

Connie Williams: An EPA workshop will take place on Feb. 10-11.

6. Discussion of California's Sustainable Groundwater Act and its impact on Tuolumne County.

Karl Rodefer: A sliver of western Tuolumne County is included in a high priority water basin.

Daniel Richardson: 80 residences currently have well failures.

Ron Ringen: Asked if the BOS has authorized Environmental Health to do a well study.

Beverly Shane: Environmental Health is mapping well outages.

7. Reports

Daniel Richardson: reported on the National Disaster Resilience Competition.

Tom Trott: Pinecrest and Lyons Reservoir levels are higher than last year at this time.

Jim Roehl: US EPA funded a septic line through the Rancheria.

8. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 2:53 PM.

AGENDA REQUEST AND SUMMARY

For: 4/7/15 (Date of Board Meeting)
_____ (Time, if appointment scheduled with the Clerk)

Consent Calendar: Yes ___ No X

Public Hearing: Yes ___ No X

1. **WORDING FOR AGENDA** (Include precise wording for required action, authorizing, etc. as it will appear on the Board Agenda, generally not to exceed 20 words).

Consideration of approving correspondence to the State Water Resources Control Board in support of the Notice of Intent to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Pinecrest Lake level modification project.

2. **FINANCING-ESTIMATED COUNTY COST:** (Enter "none" if no cost)

3. **FUNDS BUDGETED:** Yes _____ Acct. # or Fund _____ No
Requested from _____ Fund

4. **REVIEWED WITH:**
- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------|----|
| COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER | - | YES <u>X</u> | NO |
| COUNTY COUNSEL | - | YES <u>X</u> | NO |
| ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST | - | YES <u>X</u> | NO |
| OTHER DEPARTMENTS (List) | | | |

5. **THE FOLLOWING OUTSIDE AGENCIES OR INDIVIDUALS TO BE NOTIFIED OF BOARD ACTION:** (**Minute Excerpt** – Include complete mailing address and indicate number of copies to whom)

A.
B.
C.
D.

6. **Number OF COPIES REQUIRED BY REQUESTING DEPARTMENT:**
(Indicate Minute Excerpt, Resolution, Agreement, etc.)

7. **COMMENTS** (i.e. has this item come before the Board previously and when?):

Requesting Department: CAO Submitted by: Craig L. Pedro
Approved by: [Signature] Date: 3-25-15
(Department Head Signature)



County Administrator's Office

Craig L. Pedro
County Administrator

Tuolumne County Administration Center
2 South Green Street
Sonora, CA 95370
Phone (209) 533-5511
Fax (209) 533-5510
www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov

March 25, 2015

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Craig L. Pedro, County Administrator
Daniel M. Richardson, Deputy County Administrator *DMR*

SUBJECT: Modification of Pinecrest Lake Level

During dry years, the amount of water flowing into and out of Pinecrest Lake gets heightened attention due to the direct connection between this water's availability to Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) for power generation as well as its importance to Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD) for municipal use. The owner of Pinecrest Lake, PG&E, filed a request in 2011 to modify the minimum pre Labor Day Pinecrest Lake level. The State Water Resources Control Board evaluated PG&E's proposal and issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration to modify Pinecrest Lake's water level (Notice attached). Specifically, the NOI changes the current minimum summer lake elevation of 5,608 feet to range from a minimum of 5,600 to 5,606 feet, depending on the type of water year: the dryer the year, the lower the allowable minimum lake level. A letter has been prepared for the Board to support this proposed action.

Representatives from TUD support this proposed action as it provides the needed flexibility to draw down water during the dry summer months whereas this is currently not an option. Another benefit included in the NOI is the removal of tree stumps and boulders to allow for an enhanced recreational experience during lower lake levels. The Notice also mentions a "modification of shoreline sediment" which likely means adding beach sand at lower lake elevations.

The NOI is responsive to a May 21, 2013 Board of Supervisors letter (attached) sent on this topic which pushed for flexibility and to balance recreation with consumptive use.

Comments on the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration are due by April 15, 2015. Should this proposal be adopted, it provides another tool towards solving Tuolumne County's complex water supply puzzle.

Recommendation:

Consideration of approving correspondence to the State Water Resources Control Board in support of the Notice of Intent to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Pinecrest Lake level modification project.

Cc: Tom Scesa, Tuolumne Utilities District



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR



MATTHEW RODRIGUEZ
SECRETARY FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

State Water Resources Control Board

MAR 16 2015

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY'S PINECREST LAKE LEVEL MODIFICATION PROJECT

SPRING GAP-STANISLAUS HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT, FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION PROJECT NO. 2130

To: Interested Parties Mailing List

On December 16, 2011, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) filed a request with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) to modify the existing Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification (certification) condition pertaining to the minimum Pinecrest Lake level. Pinecrest Lake is part of PG&E's Spring Gap-Stanislaus Hydroelectric Project, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Project No. 2130. Pinecrest Lake is located on the South Fork Stanislaus River in Tuolumne County, California. Prior to making a modification to the certification, the State Water Board must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).¹ The State Water Board is the lead agency under CEQA.

PG&E's Pinecrest Lake Level Modification Project (Project) proposes that PG&E be allowed to lower the surface elevation of Pinecrest Lake, until and including Labor Day each year, from the current minimum elevation of 5,608 feet to a range of minimum elevations between 5,606 feet and 5,600 feet, depending on the water year type as defined in the existing certification. Other activities proposed with the Project include the removal of underwater boating hazards such as tree stumps and boulders to facilitate boating and other recreation activities at lower lake elevations, and modification of shoreline sediment to enhance the quality of shoreline-based recreation at lower lake elevations.

As lead agency, in accordance with CEQA, the State Water Board is proposing to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Project. This information is provided in satisfaction of the formal written notice requirements for public review of a MND (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15072). The State Water Board is accepting comments on the Initial Study (IS)/MND. The comment period is from the date of this notice until April 15, 2015. **Comments on the IS/MND must be received by 12:00 pm (noon) on April 15, 2015.** Comments can be submitted electronically or by mail to:

¹ The entire Spring Gap-Stanislaus Hydroelectric Project was evaluated under CEQA prior to issuance of the certification in 2009; however that CEQA document did not consider Pinecrest Lake levels below 5,608 feet before Labor Day.

Jeffrey Parks
 State Water Resources Control Board – Division of Water Rights
 Water Quality Certification Program
 P.O. Box 2000
 Sacramento, CA 95812-2000
 or
 Email: jeff.parks@waterboards.ca.gov

The MND may be obtained, or reviewed during normal business hours, by contacting Mr. Jeffrey Parks at (916) 341-5319 or Jeff.Parks@waterboards.ca.gov, or by visiting the State Water Board webpage for the Spring Gap – Stanislaus Hydroelectric Project at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/springgap_ferc2130.shtml

The MND will be available for review at the following locations:

State Water Resources Control Board 1001 I Street, 2 nd Floor, Room 2-114 Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 341-5300	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board - Sacramento Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-6114 (916) 464-3291	Tuolumne County Library 850 Greenly Street Sonora, CA 95370 (209) 533-5507
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KEEP INFORMED OF PROJECT MILESTONES

To receive emails related to the Project and other projects pursuing certifications managed by the Division of Water Rights, interested persons should enroll in the "Water Rights Water Quality Certification" e-mail notification service. Click the "Subscribe" button at the bottom of the Division of Water Rights' Water Quality Certification Program webpage at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/

By enrolling in this email list, you will receive notices for all current projects in the Division of Water Rights' Water Quality Certification Program, including the Project. You will need a valid email address to use this service. If you do not have internet access or do not wish to participate in the email subscription list, you may contact Mr. Jeffrey Parks, Project Manager, at (916) 341-5319 and request to receive notices by mail. You can enroll or un-enroll from the email subscription service at any time.

The State Water Board will consider the IS/MND, along with the Project and associated Spring Gap-Stanislaus Hydroelectric Project records, before making a decision on PG&E's request. If the State Water Board decides to make changes to the existing certification based on PG&E's request, the State Water Board will issue an amended certification for the Spring Gap-Stanislaus Hydroelectric Project.

Sincerely,



Erin Ragazzi
 Water Quality Certification Program Manager

Enclosure: Interested Parties Mailing List

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Alicia L. Jamar, *Chief Deputy
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors*

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF TUOLUMNE

Sherri Brennan, *First District*
John L. Gray, *Fourth District*

Randy Hanvelt, *Second District*

Evan Royce, *Third District*
Karl Rodefer, *Fifth District*

May 21, 2013

Thomas Howard, Executive Director
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

Re: Modify Pinecrest Lake minimum water elevation

Dear Mr. Howard:

The Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors is greatly concerned with the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) decision to prioritize recreational use over domestic use for summer water deliveries from Pinecrest Reservoir to Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD). By placing recreation use above that of consumption places the residents of Tuolumne County in jeopardy of not having this critical water resource during the most critical summer months. Consumptive use should trump recreation and it is imperative that the current water policy for Pinecrest Reservoir be reversed to align with historical practice and to agree with State Water Code.

On December 16, 2011, TUD and PG&E submitted a request to the SWRCB to allow for lower lake levels at Labor Day in order to support domestic water supply. The modified lake level request, if applied, provides reasonable water supply for the next 30 years and allows for a Labor Day Pinecrest elevation as low as 5,600 feet. Tuolumne County supports this request as one possible solution to improve the County's domestic water supply.

Flexibility should be built into Pinecrest Lake's water prioritization system. During normal precipitation or wetter than normal precipitation years, the State Water Quality Control Board's decision to make recreational water use its top priority should not be a problem. However, in 13 out of the past 38 years, TUD has needed to draw water from Pinecrest prior to Labor Day. A flexible water use policy is needed.

The citizens and visitors to Tuolumne County depend on the availability of water for domestic, business, and agricultural uses. Fire flow is another critical issue facing

Thomas Howard, Executive Director
May 21, 2013
Page 2

Tuolumne County and the unavailability of water during the driest summer months would be a travesty. In addition, development activity may diminish if water availability is in question.

According to legal analysis done by TUD, the new policy of placing recreational water use over domestic use is in direct opposition to the State Water Code. The Water Code appropriately makes domestic water use its highest priority, but it also gives flexibility to weigh other competing uses in making water allocation decisions.

The economy and community of Tuolumne County rely on adequate water supplies to support existing and future business, recreation and tourism, and the general population. The current rigid decision to place recreation uses above domestic is unfortunate, potentially dangerous to the residents of Tuolumne County, and is not backed by State law. Flexibility should be introduced into the allocation of Pinecrest Reservoir's water. Pinecrest Reservoir's water supply predictability and reliability can be achieved for TUD customers, PG&E, the State Board and recreation at the lake by approval of the modified lake level being requested by TUD and PG&E.

The attached fact sheet produced by TUD gives specific information about summertime lake levels and historical use of Pinecrest's water. The Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors requests a reverse of current water priorities at Pinecrest Reservoir, giving greater flexibility to support domestic water needs during the dry summer months.

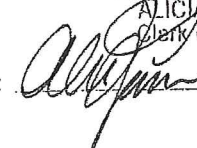
Sincerely,



Randell A. Hanvelt, Chairman

Cc: State Water Board Members
Tom McClintock, Congressman, 4th District
Jerry Brown, Governor
Tom Berryhill, Senator, 14th District
Frank Bigelow, Assemblyman, 5th District
Susan Skalski, Stanislaus National Forest Supervisor
Pacific Gas & Electric
Pete Kampa, Tuolumne Utilities District

I hereby certify that according to the provisions of Government Code Section 25103, delivery of this document has been made.

By: 
ALICIA L. JAMAR
Clerk of the Board

April 7, 2015

Jeffrey Parks
State Water Resources Control Board—Division of Water Rights
Water Quality Certification Program
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

Dear Mr. Parks:

The Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors supports the proposed Notice of Intent to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) Company's Pinecrest Lake Level Modification Project. By modifying the minimum pre Labor Day lake level from the current 5,608 feet to the lower range of between 5,600 and 5,606 feet, PG&E and ultimately Tuolumne Utilities District are provided much needed flexibility to provide water to downstream customers.

The current drought has been particularly difficult for TUD and its customers due to the reliance on reserves mainly in Lyon's Reservoir which receives little water during the dry summer months. In 2014, TUD implemented a water conservation program and its customers responded by using 30 percent less water. This led to customer hardships ranging from agriculture to loss of residential gardens. TUD and other water utilities suffered financial losses due to less water usage.

This NOI will also provide recreational benefits to Pinecrest Lake users. It calls for the removal of tree stumps and boulders which would become part of the beachscape should the lake levels be reduced. In addition, the plan calls for placing more sand at the lower elevation levels.

The NOI is responsive to Tuolumne County's May 21, 2013 letter sent on this topic. This proposed action balances the needs of the various users of Pinecrest Lake's water and the winners include recreation, municipal consumption, public safety, and Tuolumne County's economy. Pinecrest Lake is a critical piece in this County's water puzzle. It is heartening for various public and private agencies to work together for a common beneficial solution. The Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors supports the NOI and looks forward to seeing final approval of a flexible lower elevation for Pinecrest Lake during the summer months.

Thank you,

JOHN GRAY
Chair, Board of Supervisors

Cc: Tom Scesa, General Manager, Tuolumne Utilities District

AGENDA REQUEST AND SUMMARY

For: 4/7/15 (Date of Board Meeting)
_____ (Time, if appointment scheduled with the Clerk)

Consent Calendar: Yes ___ No X
Public Hearing: Yes ___ No X

1. **WORDING FOR AGENDA** (Include precise wording for required action, authorizing, etc. as it will appear on the Board Agenda, generally not to exceed 20 words).

Consideration of approving correspondence to the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Marine Fisheries Service supporting a balanced approach to water flows in the Stanislaus River and its resulting impacts to Lake Tulloch.

2. **FINANCING-ESTIMATED COUNTY COST:** (Enter "none" if no cost)

3. **FUNDS BUDGETED:** Yes _____ Acct. # or Fund _____ No
Requested from _____ Fund

4. **REVIEWED WITH:**
- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------|----|
| COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER | - | YES <u>X</u> | NO |
| COUNTY COUNSEL | - | YES <u>X</u> | NO |
| ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST | - | YES <u>X</u> | NO |
| OTHER DEPARTMENTS (List) | | | |

5. **THE FOLLOWING OUTSIDE AGENCIES OR INDIVIDUALS TO BE NOTIFIED OF BOARD ACTION:** (**Minute Excerpt** – Include complete mailing address and indicate number of copies to whom)

A.
B.
C.
D.

6. **Number OF COPIES REQUIRED BY REQUESTING DEPARTMENT:**
(Indicate Minute Excerpt, Resolution, Agreement, etc.)

7. **COMMENTS** (i.e. has this item come before the Board previously and when?):

Requesting Department: CAO Submitted by: Craig L. Pedro
Approved by: [Signature] Date: 3-24-15
(Department Head Signature)



County Administrator's Office

Craig L. Pedro
County Administrator

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2 South Green Street
Sonora, CA 95370
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www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov

March 24, 2015

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Craig L. Pedro, County Administrator
Daniel M. Richardson, Deputy County Administrator *DMR*

SUBJECT: Potential Early Drawdown of Lake Tulloch Lake Level

The four year drought is finally impacting Lake Tulloch, one of the only area lakes whose summer water level has remained consistent throughout the drought. Several factors are combining that could potentially require the release of more water downstream to satisfy valley farmers and fish flows. Officials from the Oakdale Irrigation District and South San Joaquin Irrigation District report that they have reached an agreement (Press Release attached) with the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Marine Fisheries Service that should allow normal summer water levels (506' to 509') at Lake Tulloch through Labor Day. A comment letter encouraging efforts to not impact the summer water levels has been prepared for Board consideration.

A potential lowering of the Lake Tulloch water level could impact Tuolumne County residents and visitors in a variety of ways. Two water systems serving 17 residences on the Tuolumne County side draw their water from the lake and could be impacted with turbidity and possibly having their pipes completely out of the water depending on the drawdown. The elevation of their intakes is not currently known. In addition, there are four separate residences that draw their water directly out of the lake. Sierra Conservation Center also takes their water from Lake Tulloch, but the only impact they report is the possibility of turbidity due to the depth of their intake.

Recreation and property values could be severely impacted. Depending on how far down the water level is reduced, the current wide boat ramp at the South Shore Lake Tulloch marina may become unusable. This would require boaters to use the older and more narrow boat ramp. Many docks on the lake could become unusable and damaged if not removed. If a lower lake level becomes the norm, lake-front and nearby property values would likely experience negative impacts.

Tuolumne County's property taxes and Lake Tulloch concessionaire revenue would certainly decrease with a lower lake level. The County's share of the concession revenue is approximately \$115,000 per year.

...serving the Board of Supervisors, departments, and the community as good stewards of the County's fiscal and human resources through collaborative, professional and ethical leadership.

Calaveras County's concerns with a lower lake level center around the same issues as Tuolumne County: property, water intake, and recreation. Calaveras County Water District takes water from Lake Tulloch and could be negatively impacted. The number of homes on the Calaveras County side is exponentially higher than in Tuolumne County. As a result, the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors adopted a Resolution addressing these issues.

Staff is in contact with representatives from Tri-Dam and will monitor and communicate any changes to the status of Lake Tulloch as they happen.

Recommendation:

Consideration of approving correspondence to the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Marine Fisheries Service supporting a balanced approach to water flows in the Stanislaus River and its resulting impacts to Lake Tulloch.

Cc: Susan Larson, Tri-Dam Project

April 7, 2015

National Marine Fisheries Service

Bureau of Reclamation

Dear _____:

As one of the two counties that shares Lake Tulloch, the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors is concerned with potential lake level drawdown plans and their negative impacts to county residents and visitors. Tuolumne County understands the dire nature of the drought and the need for careful water resource planning. Should it be necessary to reduce Lake Tulloch's lake level, Tuolumne County's impacts would include municipal water intake, reduced property values, and recreation.

Tuolumne County is heartened by the tentative agreement reached between Oakdale Irrigation District, South San Joaquin Irrigation District and the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding water flow on the Stanislaus River. The ideal approach balances fish flows with agriculture, municipal, and recreation needs.

There are several water intakes on the Tuolumne County side of Lake Tulloch serving approximately 25 residences through small water utilities or individual systems. In addition, Sierra Conservation Center receives its water through an intake located near the O'Byrne's Ferry Road Bridge. It is unknown the actual impacts a lower lake level would have on these various water intakes and could range from turbidity issues to an intake being completely out of the water.

Many more residences receive their water through wells which could be impacted if the water level is dropped on a more permanent basis. The drought is already causing problems with the wells at the County managed South Lake Tulloch R.V. Campground & Marina with its approximately 100 water hookups (primarily campsites plus a few full time residences). Should hydraulic connections exist between the lake and some wells, dry or underperforming wells will likely result.

Combining municipal water issues with an unpredictable lake level, property values surrounding Lake Tulloch would almost certainly decrease causing hardship on homeowners. There would be a sharp reduction in the desirability to live on or near Lake Tulloch. Ultimately this would result in a drop in property taxes. Other area lakes do not share these same concerns because they do not have lake front properties/subdivisions.

Due to the dependable summer water level of between 506.5' and 509.5', Lake Tulloch is a recreation destination. The revenue generated from recreationists in the form of sales tax, gas tax, and concessionaire revenue is significant to both Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties. For example, the Tuolumne County run South Shore Lake Tulloch R.V.

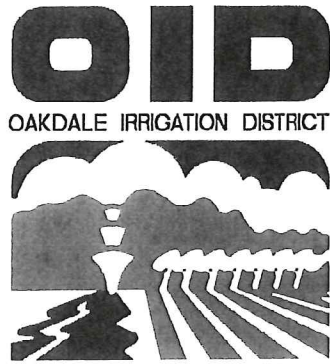
Campground & Marina contributes approximately \$115,000 annually to Tuolumne County.

The Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors lends its voice to support the balanced approach to the Stanislaus River's required flows. With dwindling supplies, meeting the various water demands is complex and should be prioritized. For Tuolumne County, the top priorities include service to existing municipal water systems, maintaining property values, and providing consistent recreation opportunities. This Board of Supervisors looks forward to a response from your agency addressing these priorities.

Thank you,

JOHN GRAY
Chair, Board of Supervisors

Cc: Susan Larson, Tri-Dam Authority
Steve Knell, General Manager, Oakdale Irrigation District
Jeff Shields, General Manager, South San Joaquin Irrigation District



SOUTH SAN JOAQUIN
IRRIGATION DISTRICT

March 23, 2015

Contact: Steve Knell, OID general manager, (209) 840-5508 or srknell@oakdaleirrigation.com
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OID, SSJID, Reclamation and National Marine Fisheries reach deal over New Melones water releases for 2015

Two Central California water agencies have reached a tentative agreement with federal officials regarding water flow on the Stanislaus River. The tentative agreement is a balanced approach to meeting the competing needs of agriculture, fish, power generation, municipal supply, recreation and storage in the watershed.

The deal is between the Oakdale and South Joaquin irrigation districts and the Bureau of Reclamation and National Marine Fisheries Service. The bureau operates New Melones Reservoir on the Stanislaus River and National Marine Fisheries Services manages the federal flow requirements prescribed for fish under a Biological Opinion. OID and SSJID have historic rights to surface water from the river.

At issue is how to stretch a limited supply of water behind the dam, which sits at just 24% of capacity. The reservoir near Angels Camp in Calaveras County can hold 2.4 million acre-feet of water. Monday, it had about 585,000 acre-feet. With the snowpack in the Central Sierra at an all-time low, there is little runoff expected this spring.

Irrigation district officials have been talking for months with their counterparts at the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Marine Fisheries Service. Congressmen Tom McClintock, R-Roseville, and Jeff Denham, R-Modesto, also were involved, and instrumental in advocating for a balanced approach to all needs.

As part of the agreement, the Bureau of Reclamation will file a Temporary Urgency Change Petition with the California State Water Resources Control Board this week. The water board must approve the petition at its meeting next month for the agreement to be fully implemented. If the water board imposes additional terms and conditions, the sensitive framework reached by the water districts and federal regulators may be lost.

"We're very appreciative of the efforts of the federal agencies and the congressional officials to work diligently to create this balanced approach to the Stanislaus River," said OID General Manager Steve Knell, speaking on behalf the two irrigation districts.

OID serves about 62,000 acres in northeastern Stanislaus County and southeastern San Joaquin County. Farmers dependent upon its water are part of an agricultural estimated to be worth \$3.663 billion in 2013 in Stanislaus County.

SSJID provides water to about 72,000 agricultural acres in Escalon, Ripon and Manteca, and also domestic water for the city of Tracy. The San Joaquin County farm economy had an estimated value of \$2.921 billion in 2013.

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Top Story

Governor Brown, Legislative Leaders Announce \$1 Billion Emergency Drought Package

3-19-2015

SACRAMENTO - Mobilizing state resources to face another year of extreme dry conditions, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. today joined Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León, Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins, and Republican Leaders Senator Bob Huff and Assemblymember Kristin Olsen to announce legislation to help local communities cope with the ongoing, devastating drought. The \$1 billion package will expedite bond funding to make the state more resilient to the disastrous effects of climate change and help ensure that all Californians have access to local water supplies.

"This unprecedented drought continues with no signs yet of letting up," said Governor Brown. "The programs funded by the actions announced today will provide direct relief to workers and communities most impacted by these historic dry conditions."

The legislation includes more than \$1 billion for local drought relief and infrastructure projects to make the state's water infrastructure more resilient to extreme weather events. The package accelerates \$128 million in expenditures from the Governor's budget to provide direct assistance to workers and communities impacted by drought and to implement the Water Action Plan. It also includes \$272 million in Proposition 1 Water Bond funding for safe drinking water and water recycling and accelerates \$660 million from the Proposition 1E for flood protection in urban and rural areas.

"Taken together, this package provides a major boost to our state's efforts to manage the drought and strengthen our infrastructure," said pro Tempore De León. "I want to thank the Governor and the Speaker for working together to respond to this crisis. It shows how we--as leaders--can get things done when we all work together in common purpose."

"The drought isn't letting up, so we can't let up either," said Speaker Atkins. "This legislation will deliver relief to Californians harmed by the drought and help us manage the significant problems the drought continues to cause. Since our skies are still clear--our job is too. And making sure we meet emergency needs, prepare for short term problems, and advance longer-term projects are an important part of that effort."

"I want to thank the Governor, the pro Tem and the Speaker for inviting us today. We were briefed on this proposal just this morning, and so far it sounds like a good approach. We need to review the legislation in detail but it seems like a reasonable start," said Senate Republican Leader Bob Huff. "Republicans have consistently said that storage is essential for providing a reliable water source to all of California for future generations. The Prop 1 water bond that was passed last year is a critical step forward in meeting the needs for California's future. There's no question California's drought crisis has worsened, as once again we've experienced a dry winter. With the hot summer months approaching, it's incumbent on all Californians to be responsible with how they use water. It's critical that we act now."

"This emergency drought relief is an important band aid," said Assembly Republican Leader Kristin Olsen. "We must move beyond temporary fixes. Projects to increase water supply have been hung up in government red tape for decades. I'm glad today we are making decisions that help people and look to us all to take real actions on long-term projects so emergency actions are no longer needed."

The Sierra Nevada snowpack, which Californians rely on heavily during the dry summer months for their water needs, is at a near record low. The March snowpack measurement came in at 0.9 inches of water content in the snow, just 5 percent of the March 3rd historical average for the measurement site. The overall water content for the Northern Sierra snowpack came in at 4.4 inches, just 16 percent of average for the date. Central and southern Sierra readings were 5.5 inches (20 percent of average)

and 5 inches (22 percent) respectively. Only in 1991 has the water content of the snow been lower.

Taking action to further strengthen water conservation in the state, the State Water Resources Control Board on Tuesday voted to expand and extend an emergency regulation to prohibit certain water use, such as washing down sidewalks, and create a minimum standard for outdoor irrigation restrictions by urban water suppliers.

Since last February, the state has pledged over \$870 million to support drought relief, including money for food to workers directly impacted by the drought, funding to secure emergency drinking water supplies for drought impacted communities and bond funds for projects that will help local communities save water and make their water systems more resilient to drought. Last month, Governor Brown met with U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell in Sacramento to announce nearly \$20 million in federal drought relief for California's Central Valley Project.

In December 2013, the Governor formed a Drought Task Force to closely manage precious water supplies, to expand water conservation wherever possible and to quickly respond to emerging drought impacts throughout the state. The following month, the administration finalized a comprehensive Water Action Plan that charts the course for California to become more resilient in the face of droughts and floods and the Governor declared a drought state of emergency. In April 2014, the Governor called on the state to redouble their efforts at combating drought.

Last fall, the Governor signed legislation requiring local, sustainable groundwater management as well as legislation to put a water bond before voters, which won bipartisan approval in the Legislature and was approved overwhelmingly at the polls. He also issued an Executive Order streamlining efforts to provide water to families in dire need as the extreme drought continues to grip the state by making funding available through the California Disaster Assistance Act to provide water for drinking and sanitation to households currently without running water.

Governor Brown has called on all Californians to reduce their water use by 20 percent and prevent water waste. Visit SaveOurWater.com to find out how everyone can do their part and Drought.CA.Gov to learn more about how California is dealing with the effects of the drought.

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